

## MENTAL HEALTH LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

April 13, 2009 - MINUTES

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**In attendance:** Council Members: Chairman Jacob Wagner, Tom Peluso, John Watson, Jerry Johnson, Charlotte Kress, Jan Bjork, Kathy Berg, Carolyn Robinson, Vickie Groeneweg, Sally Miller, Stephanie Nelson, and Bill Murdock; Advocacy Members: Scott Malloy (MHC), Dennis Cox (AMDD), Andrea Lower (Court Services), Eric Bryson (City Commissioner), Jana Lehman (MMHA), Shelly Heilweil, Diane Conte (Help Center) and Anita Roessman (Disability Rights Montana); and Staff: Glenda Howze.

**Call to Order and Introductions** - 12:04 PM.

**Public Comment** - Ms. Kress asked where the new Hope House will be located. Mr. Peluso gave detailed directions to the campus location.

**Approval of Minutes** - Mr. Cox requested that a note be added after John Watson's report on the Drop-In Center that stated that AMDD oversees the Drop-In Center contract. The LAC is the advisory board to the Center but ultimately Mr. Cox is the manager of the Drop-In Center grant. Ms. Howze will also make spelling corrections to names, etc. as needed.

**Review and Recommendation of Approval of Revised Bylaws for MHLAC** - Ms. Howze explained that the bylaws need to be revised in order to allow for the additional members that the Council has requested. She made note of other small, unsubstantial changes made to the bylaws. Mr. Peluso made a motion that we adopt the amended bylaws as printed and request the County Commission do the same. Ms. Bjork seconded the motion. The motion was amended to strike "or advocates" in Article 3, first bullet, and replace with "and/or family members." The second agreed with the amendment. All voted aye on the amendment. Mr. Peluso made a motion to add "...unless approved by the County Commission." to Article 7. Discussion took place regarding this motion. No second was made and Mr. Peluso withdrew his motion. All vote aye on the amended motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Legislative Update** - Mr. Peluso introduced Anita Roessman from Disability Rights Montana. She gave a detailed report on the mental health bills in the legislature at this time; noting that these bills came from the bottom up. We need beds in our communities and not having them is costing lives. The mental health community recognizes that these bills are being funded with one-time money but are considering it a demonstration grant, asking for the opportunity to let us show the State how it will work. HB 645 - they put a telethon in place and suggestions were made on where to take the money from to fund it. They did away with the dues paid to the National Council for State Legislatures and that money when to crisis bills. Senator Laslovich has been helping. Our own Senator Balyeat suggested that the money that comes from class action law suits be divvied up and money appropriated to the crisis bills. Many inventive solutions were suggested, and some that weren't as feasible. Ms. Roessman emphasized that the Governor needs to know how important these bills are to our communities. One of the arguments for the opposition was the unrealistic implementation schedule initially suggested. The programs need to be started by the fall. Ms. Heilweil asked about inviting the Governor to the ground-breaking. This is a good idea but will be too late for the purposes of helping his legislative decisions.

**Drop-in-Center Construction** - Mr. Watson reported that the Center has had a great quarter. They are crammed in and very full. With AMDD approval they are beginning plans to build a new center on campus using money that will come from the State. The proposed Center will have about 1700 square feet - currently they have 300-400. It will be built with a full kitchen and could be a day treatment center in the future. Ms.

Miller inquired about closed meeting spaces. Mr. Watson said this has been worked out in the new plans. Ms. Miller made a motion to approve the new building and the plans for it, on the campus (hospital) as its own structure. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. In discussion Mr. Wagner asked about the numbers continuing once the facility is located more out of town rather right down town. Mr. Watson said this has been considered and there may be an initial drop but they think that it will pick back up once people are familiarized with the new location. Streamline and Galavan are both on board and will work with the Center on the route issues. Ms. Miller stated that there may be a drop initially but there are some that don't like the current location because of some privacy issues. Mr. Watson stated that they will also work on extending the hours as well. Mr. Peluso suggested that the LAC endorse the concept with a letter of support for this plan. All voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

**Priority Table Review and Discussion of 2009 Goals** - Continued to next meeting.

**Meeting adjourned** at 1:10 PM